

5 April 1982
MMB-2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Swaziland Bureau--March 1982

I. GENERAL

Ambassador Matheron announced that he is to be replaced within the next few months as part of the State Department's normal rotation of ambassadors. The State Department advised him that his replacement has been picked, but that the name was not being given out. As of month's end, no one at post knew the name of the State Department's choice. Ambassador Matheron, who has been in Mbabane almost 2 and a half years, plans to depart 24 May. Under normal procedures, his replacement is not expected here until at least a month later.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial

Job offers have been accepted by the bureau's three top applicants, all Swazis, and the necessary processing steps to bring them on board are in progress. The French applicant is expected to start on 13 April, while one of the Afrikaans applicants should be able to start shortly thereafter. The second Afrikaans applicant was required to give six weeks' notice to the school at which he teaches so will not be able to start until mid-May.

B. Communications

1. After two solid weeks of tireless effort and constant attention, bureau engineer [redacted], assisted by TDY'er [redacted], was able to overcome several nagging problems with the bureau's communications circuit and

STAT
SSTAT

complete the transfer of the circuit from the Embassy to the bureau. The difficulties included bad relays, circuit problems at the Johannesburg PTT and a lack of expertise at the local PTT, where inexperienced personnel at one point had the wires for the circuit reversed. The problem was finally traced to the incompatibility of the bureau's Extel B-315 equipment with the circuit when the Extel TD's were used to send traffic. The circuit was finally made operational when an Addmaster tape reader was substituted as the operative TD in place of the Extels.

2. One of the bureau's teletypist applicants accepted a job offer during the month, though the need to give a month's notice to her present employer will delay her EOD until early May. Two other applicants are considering job offers. One of the Embassy's former teletype operators, who presently works for the Peace Corps as a secretary, is also very interested in a job and an effort will be made to overcome the technicalities of her Peace Corps employment.

C. Technical

The bureau's top tech applicant accepted a job offer, but will not be able to start immediately. He is employed by the Swazi Government, which trained him, and they require either three months' notice or the reimbursement of three months' salary. He is trying to arrange a loan to pay back his salary, but it will probably be three months before he can start work.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. The Post FSN Classification Panel met twice during the month to grade the bureau's position descriptions. Unfortunately, the classification system used, based on a Navy personnel system, does not readily lend itself to grading professional-level positions. That, plus an unfortunate air of provincialism on the part of the other participants, led to a lengthy debate on bureau grades. A problem

developed immediately over the bureau's basic monitorial position, which was graded too low to allow the hiring of the bureau's top applicants. After a written appeal to the Ambassador and a further debate within the Country Team, the panel agreed at its second meeting to raise the grading by one grade, thus making it possible to offer sufficient salaries to attract the top applicants. The tech position was also graded one grade lower than it should have been, but that did not prevent recruitment of the bureau's top applicant.

2. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] started working 1 March as the bureau's part-time secretary. She had been brought on board as a regular employee in Washington just prior to leaving for Swaziland, and thus her employment here is a continuation of her Hqs employment.

STAT

STAT

B. Building and Grounds

1. A local German contractor has been given the contract to renovate the bureau, knocking down several walls and constructing several new ones, completely renovating the lighting and doing other necessary interior work to make the former residence into a bureau. The work, which will start 5 April, is expected to take 4-6 weeks.

2. An order for three antenna masts has been placed with a local firm, which will handle the construction and installation work. The masts will be 10 meters tall, below the level of the trees on the bureau property, and painted a greenish color to make them as inconspicuous as possible. Approval has been received from the Mbabane Town Council to erect the masts, which should be ready by the second week in April.

3. Title to the bureau and deputy chief's house officially passed to the U.S. Government, thus ending the payment of rent on each. A house for the engineer was located during the month, thus completing the selection of staff residences; the purchases

of houses for the junior editor and bureau chief are in various stages of processing.

IV. VISITS

- A. Hqs Logistics Officer [redacted] arrived on TDY 5 March to help bureau engineer [redacted] with installation work and to set up the bureau's property records. He is scheduled to depart 18 April.
- B. Ambassador Matheron and AID Swaziland Director Julius Coles visited the bureau 31 March to see the layout prior to renovation.

STAT
STAT



STAT

Chief, Swaziland Bureau, FBIS

cc: Chief, Abidjan Bureau